

Edwards Secures Funds to Help Johnson County Construct an Emergency Operations Center As Bill Passes House

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Chet Edwards announced that he has secured funding that will help Johnson County build an Emergency Operations Center under the 2010 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, which passed the House Wednesday 389 to 37.

"A new Emergency Operations Center will help Johnson County emergency personnel protect our families through improved coordination and communication," said Edwards, a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee. "In the event of a national disaster or terrorist attack, there is no greater priority than to ensure the safety of our citizens. I want to thank local leaders for bringing this important project to my attention," said Edwards.

Johnson County Judge Roger Harmon said, "This is great news. This will solve a great need for the people of Johnson County. With the many challenges we have in the world today because of the threat of terrorism and natural disasters, this money would allow us to have a state of the art emergency operation center, that would benefit the cities of Cleburne, Burleson , Alvarado, Venus, Keene, Cross Timbers, Briaroaks, Rio Vista, Godley, Grandview and Joshua. We are very grateful to Congressman Edwards for his help in securing this money so that we can have a center that will benefit all of the people of Johnson County."

Specifically, Edwards added \$750,000 to the bill for the construction of a central office location

to coordinate emergency planning operations for the county. This facility will house centralized dispatches for county law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services and emergency management personnel and would serve as the primary emergency operating center for any natural or man-made disaster. Improved coordination will help cut down on EMS delays and 911 call delays. Johnson County would be responsible for 25% in matching funds to complete the project.

"I would need the approval of the Commissioners Court for the 25% matching funds, but I do not anticipate any problems," said Harmon.

Johnson County is home to one of the largest natural gas industries in the United States and serves as one of the key counties aiding in any disasters occurring for the DFW area or Comanche Peak.

The bill must still pass the Senate and be signed by the President.

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